Legislation on Banning The Sex Determination Test

196. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1500 given in the Rajya Sabha on 19th November, 1986 and state:

(a) whether government have since examined the matter regarding conducting of aminocentesis tests for determination of the sex of foetus from technical, legal and public education points of view;

(b) if so, what are the details of the study made and the decisions taken in regard thereto; and

(c) whether Government propose to bring a legislation in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A meeting on sex Determination test and Amniocentesis was held on 19-12-86 in New Delhi which was attended by renowned Social Women Organisations, Women Activists, Medical Professionals and Jurists. There was consensus of the opinion of members that these tests should be banned in the private sector organisations like Nursing Homes and clinics etc. and these should be limited to selected Government research institutions and hospitals to be licensed for the same. The meeting also recommended that there should be a comprehensive legislation having in-built mechanism for an infrastructure for implementation of the legislation effectively.

(c) A committee has been constituted which will go into this question in detail.

Basic Passenger Amenities Provided by Railways

197. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite various measures taken by Government, the basic amenities provided to the travelling public are lacking, the conditions of the coaches, cleanliness of the compartments and the quality of food supplied has been deteriorating and that there have been persistent complaints by the passengers on this account;

(b) if so, what is the machinery responsible for providing and looking after the basic amenities for the railway passengers and for the maintenance of coaches stating the periodicity of its checks to remove the deficiencies wherever noticed;

(c) what is the role of the Zonal Railway Councils in this regard and whether Government have reviewed their working to assess their utility, if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) what remedial measures are proposed to be taken by Government to improve the overall performance of the railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) The basic amenities for travelling public are being fully catered for; the condition of coaches is generally satisfactory, cleanliness of compartments assured and quality of food supplied good.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The role of Zonal Council is to provide a liaison agency and a permanent communication channel between the user|public and Indian Railways. The forum is used for bringing out Railways' shortcomings in regard to passenger amenities, services offered and removal of other public grievances. These Councils have been found useful.

(d) Constant efforts are made to improve the overall performance of Railways, specially provision of passenger amenities and other user amenities. Exclusive budgetary provision of Rs. 9 crores was made in 1986-87. Some of the steps taken to improve the overall performance of the Railways in this area are given in the endorsed statement.